

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the thorough examination of the present application that is reflected in the Official Action of July 14, 2004. In response, the specification has been amended to correct typographical errors that were noted by the undersigned upon review. Moreover, Claims 27-30 have been canceled to expedite prosecution.

Accordingly, the sole remaining issue is the rejection of pending Claims 1-12 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Admitted Prior Art Figure 1 and U.S. Patent Application No. 2002/00401030 to *Kim et al.* In order to clarify the patentable distinctions over the Admitted Prior Art Figure 1 and *Kim et al.*, independent Claim 1 has been amended by incorporating therein the recitations of dependent Claim 4 and dependent Claim 6, and Claims 4 and 6 have been canceled. Moreover, Claim 1 has also been amended to recite that the first barrier layer and the first conductive layer extend onto the first insulating layer outside the first hole. Support for this recitation may be found, for example, in Figure 2A of the present application wherein the first barrier layer **126** and the first conductive layer **128** extend outside the first hole **124**.

Amended Claim 1 is patentable over Admitted Prior Art Figure 1 and *Kim et al.* at least because Claim 1 recites that the first barrier layer and the first conductive layer also extend onto the first insulating layer outside the first hole. Neither Admitted Prior Art Figure 1 nor *Kim et al.* describe or suggest these recitations of amended Claim 1. Nor would it be obvious to provide these recitations, because in both Admitted Prior Art Figure 1 and in *Kim et al.* the first barrier layer and the first conductive layer are confined to within the contact hole in which they are formed. They do not extend beyond the contact hole. Accordingly, even if, for the sake of argument, Admitted Prior Art Figure 1 and *Kim et al.* were properly combinable, they would not describe or suggest the recitations of Claim 1. For at least these reasons Claim 1 is patentable over Admitted Prior Art Figure 1 in view of *Kim et al.* Claims 2-3, 5 and 7-12 are patentable at least per the patentability of Claim 1 from which they depend.

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In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the outstanding rejection and allowance of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

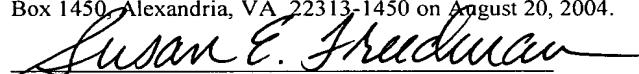


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Susan E. Freedman
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